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Mixed Memories

(The Bar in Europe)

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TORONTO

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1. Bright colored 'buses in cheery processional;
   Strand, where the floods of humanity swirled;
   Helmeted bobbies alert and professional;
   London the Motherly—heart of the world!
   Charm of the Inns with their fine hospitality;
   Judges and juniors on jollity bent;
   Men from three Commonwealths, lights of legality,
   Blackstone on holiday, chumming with Kent.

2. Strolling odd streets with their queer old appellatives;
   Sauntering Sundays in Hampton or Kew;
   Taking the children to call on their relatives,
   Mandrills and monkeys and such at the Zoo;
   Jostling through Wembley's imperial wonder-ground;
   Eking our wardrobe with hand-me-down clo'es;
   Groping our way through the maze of the Underground;
   Craning at Crippen in Madame Tussaud's.

3. Papers that pasture on crimes that are passional;
   Temple and Tower with their time-bitten walls;
   Pictures at Wallace's, Tate's and the National;
   Hush of the Abbey, the gloom of St. Paul's.
   Pride in our past and the men who were part of us,
   Hampden and Washington, Gordon and Lee;
   Pride in the battles that thrill to the heart of us,
   Somme—Vimy—Ypres—Chateau Thierry.

4. Stately St. Stephen's, the throne of democracy,
   Labour where once but the leisured could sit.
   Miners confronting the old aristocracy,
   Ramsay MacDonald, successor to Pitt.
   Hall of Westminster, whose carving pictorial
   Rufus and John and Elizabeth saw,
   Workshop of wits from an age immemorial—
   Forge of our liberties, fount of our law.

5. French of Quebec and the soft speech of Maryland,
   Accents diverse as the styles of our hats—
   Straws or grey toppers or Stetsons from prairie-land—
   Glossy silk beavers, immaculate spats,
   Thronging through Buckingham's verdure and spaciousness,
   Subject or citizen, welcome as spring;
   Royalty!—dignity, duty and graciousness,
   Omnium rex Britannorum: The King!

6. Brothers by blood and tradition primordial,
Brothers again by the service we share,
How shall we thank you for greeting so cordial?
Tell you the answering kindness we bear?
Rending old custom ad imum a vertice,
Richly fulfilling our every desire,
Giving us each in the warmth of your courtesy
Place at your table, a chair at your fire.

7. Brightest of art and the frankest of nudity;
Dim Notre Dame with the pious at prayer;
(Visions of home with our decorous crudity,)
Breadth of the Boulevards, Folies Bergères;
Gilded Versailles with its gardens and palaces;
Glory and grief at the Place of the Star;
Welcome in word and in wine-laden chalices
Drenching the drouthy American Bar.

8. Shops that allure the elusive simoleon,
Taxis that cheated the Hun of his raid,
Sidewalk cafés and the Tomb of Napoleon,
Pits where the headless in thousands were laid.
Peace to the past and its blood-spattered history—
Lithe girlish figures that float from the night,
(Vive le batonnier!) beauty and mystery,
Music and movement and exquisite light.

9. Proud lofty castle and ruptured artillery,
Knox, Jennie Geddes and foozles and putts,
Peat, grouse and heather and Kirk and distillery,
Glory of Bannockburn, sod-covered huts,
Bare-legged pipers that skirl through the greenery,
Fern of the Trossachs, the brown of its streams,
Katrine and Vennachar's rain-sodden scenery,
Misty Loch Lomond, the charm of our dreams!

10. Clydebank—and emigrant lads come aboard to us,
Eyes that are hopeful, though cheeks may be wet;
Mothers and sweethearts that wave from the shore to us—
Wave the old Flag that they mustn't forget.
Mountain and mull slipping aft, in their turn, of us—
(Heaves the wide ocean, we lift to its swell)
Fades the last light in the darkness astern of us—
Ancient grey Motherland, Hail!—and farewell.

11. Motherland, dear little, trim little Motherland,
Clear-eyed and dauntless, staunch-hearted and true,
Bearing grim burdens that press on no other land,
Paying your debts, though the world won't pay you:
Proudly we cherish our title to reckon us
Heirs of your body, the sons of your soil,
May we be worthy to walk where you beckon us—
Worthy to share in your glory and toil.

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